



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

Statistics of a Glasgow Grammar School Class of 115 Boys.

By ANDREW TENNENT, ESQ., one of their number.

[Read before the Statistical Section of the British Association at Glasgow, September, 1855.]

ABOUT sixty years ago, a class was formed in the Grammar School of Glasgow, consisting of 115 boys, whose average age would be 8 to 9 years, chiefly sons of the Glasgow merchants, manufacturers, and shop-keepers. There were also among them, some of the sons of the professors of the college, and of the clergy of the city, both established and dissenting. A son of the then Lord Provost was also of the number, as well as several of the sons of the then magistrates, besides a few sons of operative weavers, masons, and others. These things are mentioned to shew that the class was a fair representation of the respectable and industrious classes of the community, at that time; and when assembled, must have formed a very interesting group, just entering on a new course of existence. And often must the thought have occurred to the mind of their seniors, what will be the future history of these youths, after fifty or threescore years have gone over their heads? It is rather a solemn enquiry, and still more solemn the reply:—of these 115 boys, who entered school together, 60 years ago, 76 are known to be dead; the fate of 13 is uncertain; and 26 are still alive; 24 appear to have died before attaining 30 years of age; 21 between the ages of 30 and 40; 13 between 40 and 50; 5 between 50 and 60; 6 between 60 and 63; 7 between 63 and 68; in all 76 ascertained to be dead; and as the presumption is that the 13 uncertain are also dead, the total deaths, up to this date, will be 89.

The after professions of the 115 boys, appear to have been as follows:—

53 Merchants and manufacturers	2 Weavers
7 Lawyers	1 Exciseman
1 Editor	1 Private soldier
4 Clerks	1 Warper
3 Military officers	1 Surgeon
3 Clergymen	1 Carter
3 Sailors	1 Bank porter
2 Private gentlemen	27 { Uncertain, most of whom died
2 Bankers	young
1 Professor	
1 Artist	115

Of the 53 engaged in trade, no less than 35 are known to have been insolvent, though many of them have since become prosperous; and some of them are now among the rich men of the city. Of the 53, fifteen are still alive, 9 in Glasgow and 6 abroad; of the 7 lawyers only 2 remain, both in Glasgow; the editor is long since dead; of the 4 clerks all are gone but one; of the 3 military officers one remains a retired lieutenant-colonel of a cavalry regiment; of the 3 clergymen one died many years ago, he was of the Secession body, 2 are still alive, both of the established church, one of whom

was, some years ago, Moderator of the General Assembly; the 3 sailors, and the 2 private gentlemen, all died young; but the 2 bankers are still alive, in active employment, and so is the professor, occupying a chair in one of the oldest universities in Scotland; the artist, with one of the weavers, the exciseman, private soldier, warper, surgeon, and carter, are all away; but the bank porter is still alive, retired from office, and living in single blessedness on his well-earned savings; making 26, in all, still alive. Of these 21 never permanently left their native country, and 16 never permanently left their native city. Of the 60 boys who got prizes for regular attendance 20 are still alive.

None of the class have risen to what may be called distinction; many of them have been, and some still are, respectable and useful members of society; neither have any of them made themselves notorious for crime, with the exception of some half-dozen noted tipplers, all of whom are dead; none appear to have ever enjoyed civic honour, though mostly natives of the city. Some of them, however, took a loftier aim, and aspired to be members of parliament, but without success. The duxes of the class made no great appearance in after life; he who was generally dolt or booby, is now the lieutenant-colonel referred to.

From the records of the dinner bills, at the annual class meetings, it appears that, from 1802, the date of the first meeting, to 1816, the prevailing beverage was wine and cold punch, especially the latter; from 1816 down to the present date, wine and whisky toddy, and little or no punch, appear to have been the prevailing taste.

The boys who were allowed to follow out their natural bias in the selection of future professions, have been, apparently, the most successful. He who is now lieutenant-colonel of a cavalry regiment was, in boyish days, a bold and dashing horseman, and always foremost in stone fights with other schoolboys, found in the army a congenial element, and has risen to his present rank. The same may be said of the clergymen; they too, judging from their early propensities, got into their proper element, and have been, and still are, highly respectable and useful. The youths who succeeded to the business and professions of their fathers, appear to have had the smoothest passage through life. It is rather remarkable that 12 of the 26 alive are still bachelors. But, however faulty these 12 may have been, the other members of the class, as part of the general community, appear to have made ample amends; for, from 1805, when the first member of the class got married, to the present date, the population of Glasgow has increased from about 100,000 to nearly 400,000. The change in the mode of living too, is not less remarkable. The houses of most of our parents were in a close, and up a common stair in the old or eastern part of the town, now almost deserted by their descendants for stately mansions in the west, or cheerful villas in the suburbs.

During the same period, steam navigation and railways have been called into existence; trade and commerce, both foreign and domestic, as well as agriculture, have made prodigious progress, and immense mineral stores have been laid open. Education also has been greatly extended and improved; and there has been a decided advance in

moral and intellectual acquirements. These things are stated, as the 115 boys whose history we are now narrating, had, when at man's estate, their full share in all this activity and progress,—a progress the more remarkable and creditable to those engaged in it, when the agitated times in which they lived, and the difficulties they had to contend with, are considered. A few may be alluded to. The first French revolution broke out as we came into existence; since which time every European kingdom has been shaken to its foundation; the throne of France, the central kingdom, has been six times overturned; most of the other European powers have been twice subverted. Every capital on the continent, from Moscow to Lisbon, has been occupied by foreign troops. Britain, no doubt, has escaped foreign invasion; but there too, great changes have taken place, which produced convulsions of no ordinary magnitude. Among others, wars and rumours of war for the first 30 years of our lives, increasing the national debt to upwards of 800 millions—the slave trade and slavery were abolished—the gold currency restored, ruining at the time nearly one half of the then mercantile community—a sort of church and state revolution occurred by the passing of the Catholic Emancipation and Reform Bills—the East India and China monopolies were removed—the protective system set aside—and free trade introduced, with the repeal of the corn and navigation laws. In addition to all these there have been frequent visitations of famine and pestilence, with commercial convulsions every six or seven years, spreading stagnation and ruin around to such an extent, that the Bank of England has been repeatedly in jeopardy, and other banks swept from the face of the earth in scores: in one week, in 1825, nine London banking houses failed; but, notwithstanding all this confusion and overthrow, the community prospered and grew, signally illustrating the fact that the greatness of a country depends chiefly on the character and stamina of its people, of which of course the 115 boys were, during these times, a part, and had their full share in all the turmoil, for good or for evil, of the last half century.

The scene, however, so far as regards them, is now drawing to a close. Of the 115 who began the world together and fought the battles of life, 26 alone remain, now no longer boys, but aged men approaching the ordinary limits of human life—threescore years and ten; and in conclusion, it may be remarked, that the history of these 115 boys is, probably, the average history of every other 115 boys similarly circumstanced, and may be useful in moderating all mere worldly aspirations.
